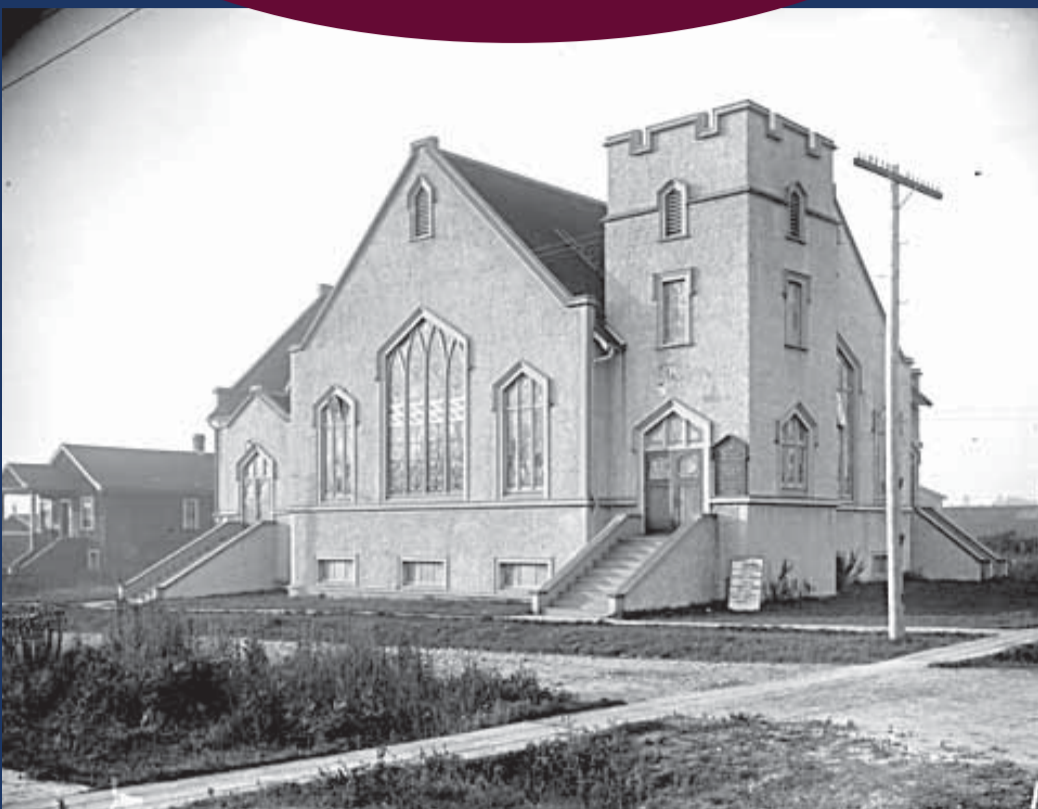


Fraser St. Stories



Courtesy of Vancouver Public Library Special Collections - VPL 7361

Ruth Morton Memorial Baptist Church. -- [ca. 1917]

Ruth Morton Baptist Church 1914 - present

The Ruth Morton Memorial Baptist Church (at the corner of 791 East 27th Avenue) is a historic link to one of Vancouver's earliest pioneer settlers, John Morton. Famous for being one of the "Three Greenhorns", along with Samuel Brighthouse and William Hailstone, these three Englishmen were the first white settlers of the area that is now today's Vancouver downtown West End. In 1862, they arrived in the place that is now Vancouver and purchased the land at an inflated price that earned them ridicule and thus their nickname.

John Morton's first wife was Jane Ann Bailey of Blackpool, England, who unfortunately died in childbirth. Later, he married Ruth Mount and this lifelong romance is now captured in the Ruth Morton Baptist Church. When Ruth arrived in 1884 to marry John Morton, she became the first white woman to settle in the area.

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The church began in 1911 with meetings in vacant stores, homes and even a tent until the building construction was completed in 1914. Upon John's death in 1912, he provided substantial funds to build the church as a memorial to his wife. The church retains much of its heritage of original pews and stained glass windows. For over a century, the church has been ringing its bell and playing its 1920's pipe organ for Sunday Service.

